

Press Intelligence, Inc.
WASHINGTON 1, D. C.

MIDDLETOWN (Conn.)
PRESS

Circ.: e 14,088

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Date: MAR 29 1954

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THE BIGGEST YET

From the little that has been said on the subject it now appears that the hydrogen blast set off at Bikini in the far Pacific March 1st was the most tremendous explosion yet set off by man, and that its devastating force went far beyond what the scientists expected.

Congressman Chet Holifield, one of those who have talked about it, said the explosion was "so far beyond what was predicted that you might say it was out of control." Other estimates of the blast put it at 600 to 700 times greater than the one at Hiroshima that killed 60,000 persons.

Naturally there has been inquiry on the part of Americans who would like to know more about the amazing advances in atomic weapons. The matter came up at President Eisenhower's press conference this week when newspapermen sought more information on the Bikini blast. And while the president didn't promise anything he did say he would confer with Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Lewis L. Strauss with the idea in mind of re-examining the commission's information policy.

The record shows that so far, at least, the commission has been the last to give out any word of the various atomic weapon tests. In about every case the information has come from someone outside the commission. In the recent Bikini test, the first inkling came from a Marine who wrote to his mother that he saw and felt the blast, although 176 miles from the scene.

As to the commission, it is required by law to protect and strengthen national security, and that is the big reason it says as little as it does on the developments in the atomic energy field. But what of Americans who want to know? It would be ridiculous to expect that the commission would gratify every wish for information, considering the nature of its work. It might even be ridiculous to say anything, the matter being difficult to weigh for those who do not know. But there should be satisfaction with the president's indication he and the AEC boss will get together and discuss whether or not more may be told to the public than has heretofore been the case.

Allan Dulles, head of the Central Intelligence Agency, recently said that government gives out too much information, and that much of it is of comfort to the enemy. This might stand some re-examination, too.